COMMERCE UNION

OF

American College, Mathurai

The Commerce Union of American College, Mathurai, held a meeting on 23rd Feb. 1953 at 4 p. m. at their college to meet Mr. G. D. Naidu, President of the Industrial Labour Welfare Association Limited, Coimbatore.

After the introduction of Mr. G. D. Naidu by Mr. P. S. Lakshminarayanan, Professor in Chemistry who presided at the meeting, Mr. G. D. Naidu gave the following speech :

Speech by

G. D. NAIDU

at Commerce Union of American College,
Mathurai, on 23—2—'53.

Dear friends,

I have to thank you as my first duty for making me to come here leaving my hard and heavy work in order to enjoy the pleasure of meeting you all. I consider this as a rest or recreation, whatever you may call it, and I return home with full energy which is being given to me by you, so that I can face with renewed strength more and more hard work. I don't know in what way I can give in return, for inviting me so kindly.

For a very long time I had no idea about the subjects that are taught and in what way the students are learning in the colleges. Even now, I do not know exactly what all you are studying here. I am glad I have seen the products of our colleges shining as eminent leaders, as eminent administrators and as eminent scientists, equal or better than the products of other

countries. Even then, one thing often strikes me. I have found in my observation of the students who have come out of colleges for the last several years that the quality of education obtained from the colleges is slowly deteriorating. I am not blaming the innocent students for the fault. I have to blame the environments introduced by the circumstances, or imitation or ignorance. As already mentioned by me, I am not aware of what you are learning exactly and for what purpose you are learning. Therefore, I feel it very hard to find out what suitable advice I can give you here. While I have not got any academic knowledge, I have to tell you something which came across in my practical experience. All of you are not very young children. You have now obtained sufficient knowledge to discriminate the good from the bad. Hence, I am not insisting upon you to follow what I say here as advices. It is for you to take what you like.

For the last few years, after carefully understanding some of the defects in the present system of education, I am continuously saying about this not only to educational authorities but also to students wherever and whenever I happen to meet them. I am tired of this kind of bullying. I feel shy to repeat the same thing again and

again like a parrot. If the defects are innumerable I can say about some defects today, some to-morrow and some to you and some to others. Thus I can give advices to avoid all the defects to several students in schools and colleges even for several years. But I find only very few defects which are either with educational system or with students having education or with the administration. These can be remedied easily. Because I am mentioning about the defects to all people whom I come across, I think, these defects may not be unknown to you also. I am not telling anything new or anything invented by me. I am telling only what is in existence and what is known to everyone.

All our leaders, teachers and parents also are telling every now and then in person at home and at the platforms through lectures about these defects. When I mention these defects to you here, if you ask me any question regarding them, I can give only my personal experience, which I actually had learnt accidentally or by experiment.

I am detailing the defects. The best place for the young children to learn is their home. The best teachers are their parents. Here the children spend most of their time day in and dayout.

When they become grown-up students the best places for them are the hostels and colleges. There are teachers in colleges to teach them any lesson with a little touch of parents. Leaving young children who are in convents or in such other institutions, majority of young children are not taken care of as they are not given training in good manners and habits as most of the parents themselves are not educated or have not got proper education. When students come to schools or colleges, generally they become masters of themselves and their parents or families. Here the indiscipline starts, because the students think that they have got higher and better education than their parents. Unfortunately, at present, teachers also are not strong enough to enforce discipline because of the difficulties created by insufficient remuneration to teachers resulting in inefficient capacity to manage. Hence false independence has taken birth in the minds of the students.

It is quite natural that young children and young students with their fresh life are able and ready to grasp anything that comes to them, whether good or bad without discrimination. In their homes, there is no control and no proper training is given. They have not learnt even the elementary knowledge - such as how to eat, how much

to eat, when not to eat and what not to eat, how to sleep, how to dress, how to take bath and how to move with others and finally how to do any work given to them. The student does all these, not in a disciplined and regulated way. With such a poor training, poor knowledge which he gained in his home, when he goes to a college, he continues to act in the same groove which he had at his house. He does not know whether cigarette smoking is good or bad, whether cinema-going is good or bad, whether reading of novel and fictions is good or bad. Whether one is good or whether one is bad, he catches all these bad habits one by one because of the environment and easy availability. I need not say that anything more than necessary is bad. In these days, the students have become mad even in sports and in similar activities, while they do not take as much interest in their study, for which they have come to colleges.

If we take the total time continuously spent in all activities from their 15th year upto 25 years of age, you are spending out of your useful 10 years' time –

For sleep	3 years	4 months	5 days
For meals & tiffin		7 ,,	18 ,,
For being under mirror		7 ,,	18 ,,

Thus you are spending 4 years, 7 months and 11 days. For study you are giving only one year, one month and fifteen days. The balance of 4 years, 3 months and 4 days is being wasted. Even in this one year, 1 month and 15 days intended for your study, I can say about half of this time you do not give your intensive attention to your studies for which you have come to the colleges. In these 10 years, you can reduce the sleep to 2 years and 6 months, for meals etc., you can reduce 6 months, under the mirror etc., you can reduce 3 months. In the balance 6 years and 9 months you can have very easily 4 to 5 years for your intensive studies. But in some cases if we put 15 to 30 years' period, boy students spend 2 years and girl students spend 4 years. If you utililize so much time for studies, then there will be no necessity for you to be in colleges for so many years. Then you will not be a burden to your parents as well as to administrators for these 4 years.

You just imagine what are the savings you have effected by your taking the commerce as your subject. Have you ever calculated these simple additions and divisions about the time spent in college courses? Have you ever taken any account

of your father's income per month and how much do you get from him for your study and from that amount how much do you spend for your dress, for your shoes, for your tooth paste and for your tooth brush, for your hair-oil, for your razor and blade, for your medicine and some other luxury materials except lipstick, which is now intended for girls only? Have you ever calculated how much amount is spent for all these expenses? What percentage of profit you are going to get after leaving the college? I am sure immediately you leave the college, you can't get any benefit at all. Then what is the fun of your college study? I am sure, there is one benefit. It is this: You have built up a foundation for the construction of your life as a building. Hereafter, you have to construct walls, roof and you have to put windows and other things. Then you have to live there with your family comfortably. Though you leave this college, you have not finalized your college course. You have to enter in another college. That is the practical college. The study here is not sufficient for your practical work. You have to learn

more practical work to apply what you have learnt in your previous college. It is only after learning some more years, in the practical work, you will reap the fruit of your study.

The general practice that is prevailing normally is that the students who leave the colleges are always in search of jobs, which can fetch atleast 3 to 6 per cent interest on the money spent on them for study. Unfortunately, they don't get such jobs, because they have not finished the practical course though they have attained proper age. But as I mentioned before, if they have taken little care in adding 2 or 3 years more time for their intensive studies instead of spending much more time in seeing cinemas and partaking in discussions and politics, attending to sports, music and meetings, reading fictions and other magazines not connected with their subjects, the students need not wander in the street hunting after jobs.

About cinema, I had an idea long ago. I am not telling this idea now. I had this view from 1933 itself. But before 1932, I had never been to any cinema except only

once to a drama in my very young age. I have contributed some articles as to how cinema poisons and brings the youngsters to their death-beds. Of course from 1933, I have worked in cinema films for educational purpose which is the most powerful weapon to remove illiteracy and to inject the knowledge in shortest time like nail inserted in a green tree and letters carved on stones. You know how snake poison kills a man immediately and how a snake poison cures some diseases of the humanity. In the same way, the cinema can make humanity lifeless more particularly the youngsters. At the same time, if it is produced with the aim of introducing education, it will give immense help for the development of humanity, and there is no other tool to spread the knowledge of education. On account of the production of films unsuitable for youngsters in the modern country of America during the last ten years of time, juvenile cases have increased more than 50 per cent in robberies and fights. In our country for the last 20 years, cases committed by youngsters have increased to 500 per cent. All these cases are mostly

learned through films and put in action in big cities and towns, of course with the exception of villages, where films are not shown. As developments are growing in other activities, film industry is also developing and is spreading to distant and remote villages. Our Chief Minister Rajagopalachari has mentioned this idea at the Pachayappa's College on 8th September, 1952 and published in the papers on the 10th. There was a strong opposition from interested people. His courage was not sufficient to bring out a bill to abolish such kind of cinema industries. If I had been the Chief Minister, the first and the foremost important work of mine will be the introduction of the bill before I tender my resignation of the job. I have contributed some articles on this subject to *Pesum Padam* 1944, *Pongal Malar* and to *Nava India* on 21—8—1952 and in an opening speech at the educational films on 21—8—1951 and also on some other subjects in *Viduthalai* dated 19—2—'53, in *Nava India* dated 20—2—'53, and "Independence Number" in *Life*, Coimbatore dated 24—3—'44 and on several other occasions.

I want to mention here that I had a blind idea several years back that there is no use in the Arts College education. The only education imparted in technical colleges is necessary and useful. With this belief, when the University Commission came to Coimbatore to make the second grade college there to one of first grade college, I vehemently attacked and emphasised that no Arts College is wanted as more number of students will be spoiled but requested them to have Engineering College or Domestic Science College. The result was that an Engineering College was started and the Arts College remained as a second grade college then. When I thought of my activities from the beginning upto now, I have come to the conclusion that subjects such as physics, chemistry, natural science, mathematics and commerce are necessary and useful. I did not then think that commerce was so important a subject as other science subjects are. Now every-one of us admit that all these subjects are inter-related and more particulary, without the sense of commerce, the remaing subjects cannot give full satisfaction or profit.

Without technical subjects, without industries developed on technical subjects, there is no use in studying commerce subjects.

I always had little or more profit in all the industries in which I entered. But I have to admit that the profits I got are not by industrial knowledge alone. The foundation for such profits is due to the commercial knowledge which I gained in my cotton business, in which I got mingled before I took to industrial line. If I had any profits in industries or any other works, it was only by savings from the waste. This knowledge of economics comes only by having the training in commerce. Hence your burden is after leaving the college. You have to devise ways and means to do everything economically to save anything without wasting.

Since you are students studying commerce subject, I wish to say something about this. The account system of a business concern or a banking system adopted in banks and other institutions may be very useful in several existing institutions. In

such places, there may be room to improve the system or to change the system for effecting more economical savings or for easy manipulation. You have to apply your knowledge gained in the college to take the utilisation to find out and evolve new methods, best methods or perfect methods. Wherever you are employed as an apprentice, or even as a very low-paid subordinate or servant, by your work, by your interest and by inquisitiveness, you must behave and work so diligently as to make the management to think that you are an asset to their business and that they should take you even as a partner. Then only you are a practical student and your life is worth living.

Because you have obtained the degree, you should not wander for jobs. You must make all preparations to take a responsible job or make your own business.

I want to tell an example. I have not studied any account system. When I started the bus business, in a very short time, I prepared a system of account suitable to this business. From 1920 up to now, the

same system is followed. The system and the forms used for this, you can't find in any book-keeping books or other text books. They are purely framed for the business to be run efficiently and economically. In the same way, in whatever vocation you are going to enter, you have to prepare everything on the basis of your knowledge obtained in the colleges and do work properly and perfectly and thus bring credit to your parents, teachers and all.

I do not want to bore you with my speech. I shall be very glad to answer any question you put, in the way I know best.

I once again thank you for inviting me to this college and thank you all for having listened to my speech.

Thank you all.